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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP  
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Austria/Italy

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DIST. 31 December 1946

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. The North Tyroleans are neither informed on current developments in the South Tyrol, nor do they at present evince any interest in its problems. Their present life is too hard and all their attention is focused on eking out an existence.
2. The officials of the Office for South Tyrol are almost as ignorant as the masses of recent developments in South Tyrol. They sent Dr. Thalhammer to South Tyrol, where he made arrangements by which Innsbruck is to receive regular reports from Bolzano.
3. The explanation for the present lack of cooperation between Bolzano and Innsbruck is in part due to the resentment felt by the South Tyroleans toward the North Tyroleans for their negative appraisal of the Paris Agreement. The officials of the Office for South Tyrol are now aware of this and strongly deny the defeatist attitude attributed to them. However, no such denials can conceal the facts that the North Tyroleans are much more sceptical than the South Tyroleans concerning the value of the Paris Agreement; that they have little or no interest in the Agreement because it offers them few benefits; that they would secretly be delighted if the Paris solution did not work out in practice. Such a contingency would permit them to resume the fight for the restoration of Tyrol's unity, since South Tyrol has now been recognized as an international problem.
4. At the moment there is considerable confusion in Innsbruck concerning the future of the Office for South Tyrol. Landeshauptmann Weissgatterer, feeling that the Tyrolean Government can no longer sponsor an organization whose main task has been to fight for the return of South Tyrol, contemplated abolishing the Office for South Tyrol and replacing it by a small committee which would advise the Tyrolean Government in all matters affecting South Tyrol, and which would be composed of Dr. Kneiss, Dr. Thalhammer, and Fritz Wirthle. This called forth considerable protest from the South Tyrol Council, which met last week to discuss the situation. It was unanimously agreed that the Office should continue to exist and even be enlarged. In particular, it was suggested that:
  - a. The South Tyrol Council should remain as advisory organ to the Tyrolean Government;
  - b. the Betreuungsstelle should be reorganized and enlarged to deal with the return to South Tyrol of the optants for Germany under the Hitler-Mussolini Agreement;

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- c. the research department, under Dr. Thalhammer, should be incorporated into Innsbruck University and be developed into an office for the collection and appropriate dissemination of all information on South Tyrol emanating from public and private sources;
  - d. an unofficial organization, privately financed, should be set up to keep the problem of South Tyrol alive, mobilize world public opinion, etc.
5. Professor Reut-Nicolussi is now working out detailed plans along these lines which, after approval by the South Tyrol Council, will be submitted to Landeshauptmann Weissgatterer.
  6. Meanwhile, Dr. Thalhammer has ideas of his own for building up an official Austrian organization to meet the requirements of the new situation. These he has recently discussed with the South Tyroleans, and they will be submitted to Dr. Gruber on his return from the United States.
  7. Pending the settlement of this problem, Landeshauptmann Weissgatterer will probably appoint Dr. Kneiss as temporary head of the Office for South Tyrol. Officially, Professor Reut-Nicolussi has retired from the South Tyrolean scene, since he realizes that a person with his uncompromising attitude cannot very well remain on in the new situation. Behind the scenes, however, he is as active as ever.
  8. At last week's meeting of the South Tyrol Council, one of its members, Herr von Moehrl, caused somewhat of a sensation by announcing that plans were far advanced, and already before the interested governments, for a Danubian customs union which would include South Tyrol and have Trieste as its "free port".

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Comment: Moehrl, a native of Bressanone and former Police Director in Innsbruck, is known as an ardent monarchist.)

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